

Appeal of Funding Decisions		Tab 5
<p><u>Background:</u></p> <p>TCDD received an appeal concerning decisions of the Executive Committee in August to not award funding for proposals. Helpful Interventions appealed TCDD’s decision to not approve funding to this organization for the Culturally Appropriate Family Supports project. Per TCDD Policy, the Executive Director prepared a Summary Report and sent to the Executive Committee for review. A copy of the Helpful Interventions Appeal, the Summary Report, and the TCDD Appeal Procedure are included.</p> <p>The purpose of TCDD’s appeal process is to ensure that TCDD procedures were followed, and that information provided in the original proposal was reviewed fairly and objectively. The Process to Appeal a funding decision is not designed as an opportunity for an applicant to provide additional information for consideration that could have been included in the original proposal. To do so would in essence create a two-stage review process that is not part of TCDD’s current procedures.</p> <p>The Executive Committee will be asked to make a final decision on this appeal.</p>		
<p><u>Executive Committee</u></p> <p><u>Agenda Item 8.</u></p>	<p><u>Expected Action:</u></p> <p>The Executive Committee will consider this information and make a final decision on the appeal.</p>	
<p><u>Council</u></p> <p><u>Agenda Item 12. B.</u></p>	<p><u>Expected Action:</u></p> <p>The Council will receive a report of Executive Committee decisions.</p>	

Appeals Request for the Gulf Coast of Texas African American Family Support Conference

August 26, 2015

Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities
Beth Stalvey
6201 E. Oltorf, Suite 600
Austin, TX 78741-7509

Dear Ms. Stalvey:

We would like to request a review and appeal of our proposal submitted for the Culturally Appropriate Family Supports project. We have responded to the concerns noted by the Review Panel and the TCDD Staff. We would like to offer information and clarifications. The clarifications are noted for each concern.

- 1. It appears there will be some involvement of individuals with IDD. However, the project activities do not appear to be sufficiently focused on, or fully include, individuals with IDD.**

The conference will provide a unique opportunity for individuals and families to convey the mission to strengthen and enlighten about current health and social service information and resources in a culturally sensitive environment. Our goal is to promote ongoing education and partnership among various community stakeholders such as individuals, families, faith-based, health, and social service providers. *Since 2011, the conference remains inclusive of all persons, ethnicities and disabilities to participate at all levels.*

Clarification: *The GCTAAFSC project includes individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) and their family members. Individuals, family members and caregivers participate in the planning and development of the educational events and are engaged to participate in educational opportunities offered by the conference. The conference topics and activities are inclusive for persons with disabilities, including individuals with intellectual disabilities. The conference provides education on disability awareness, health and wellness in a culturally sensitive environment. Conference topics includes understanding health diagnosis, navigating health, educational, service systems, individual and caregiver's self-care. Additionally, the conference recognizes individuals with IDD and their family members for their outstanding work in disability awareness and advocacy to receive the conference Flame of Inspiration Award. In 2016, the conference will continue to offer the same involvement and focus for individuals with IDD.*

In 2016, the conference planning work will have activities to be representative of individuals with co-occurring disabilities related to mental, physical and developmental disabilities. The project's

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logic model includes a methodical inclusion approach to ensure individuals with developmental disabilities are included.

2. **Although policy issues were addressed, it is unclear if the plan to address policy issues will include individuals with IDD (including the many who may also have mental/physical issues) and/or their family members.**

Clarification: *Mental health is inclusive of co-occurring, intellectual and developmental disabilities. Individuals and their family members with mental and co-occurring disabilities are often times exposed to stigma due to the lack of education and awareness. The community may lack the appropriate education to respond to a presenting mental health and/or co-occurring disability that prevents stigma and discrimination.*

We would like to highlight how this legislative policy has limitations. We will extend an opportunity for the community to become aware that the language in this particular legislation only providing educational opportunities in a public education sector only. We propose to receive feedback from stakeholders (inclusive of persons with disabilities) feedback from a pre and post-test analysis. We would like to share the responses in a format much like a policy brief to include issues related to disabilities and co-occurring health conditions. The follow up or brief will highlight limitations and/or recommendation to ensure appropriate inclusion for future policies and legislative actions.

In 2016, we are proposing to outreach and provide educational outreach to the faith-based community. In the African American community, the faith-based community is often viewed as first responders for information, resources and support. The outreach will include education on disability awareness and advocacy.

In 2013, Helpful Interventions hosted a Mental Health First Aid Training as a pre-conference educational opportunity. We used this platform to educate on the conference mission and purpose to expand the knowledge and skills including individuals with developmental disabilities, their families and their allies. Fifteen persons became knowledgeable about the content related to disabilities. Additionally, the community made a special request to have this opportunity be extended through conference. In 2016, we plan to offer the same educational opportunity.

3. **It is not clear how the project activities will be sustained after TCDD funding ends.**

Clarification: *The project to date utilize the logic model to support sustainable activities. The project has utilize fiduciary supports from having registration fees and sponsorships. To date, we have leverage and expanded funding support for the conference project. For example, the 2015 conference expenditures were funded by a fiduciary plan outline in the logic model. Hence, we were able to plan and execute two conferences in the same funding period of 2014-2015. The fiduciary outcomes was noted as successful and this same methodology will be utilized in 2016.*

4. **It is not clear who within the agency staff will work in the project and the overall infrastructure appears weak**

Clarification: *Helpful Interventions is a volunteer organization and utilize contractors to staff and support the project. To date, we have been successful in providing a streamline*

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organizational infrastructure that supports the sustainability for the conference. Additionally, to date, the conference staff is inclusive of project director, coordinator, financial manager, contracted vendors, volunteers (interns and committee members) has been able to oversee the development, planning and execution of all phases of the conference. The project staff roles and duties are outlined in a scope of work per a contractual agreement. Additionally, we utilize the logic model to support a definitive a 12 month outline to plan and execute the project endeavors. This approach has yield the highest measurable outcomes and will be utilize in planning the 2016 conference.

More specifically, the project has utilize a coordinator to coordinate planning meetings, activities and be a support to the execution of the project. We have found this position to be supportive of the planning of the conference. In 2016, we will utilize this position to be a continued support to the project. The coordinator will be Ms. Shondra Rogers-McGary. Ms. McGary brings to the project a wealth of experience from the Texas Health and Human Services Commission- the Center for Elimination of Disproportionality and Disparities (CEDD). CEDD is a supportive partner of the conference and addresses equity and health disparities in accessing appropriate healthcare and services for the African American community. CEDD has committed to providing fiduciary support and will work alongside us with other conference partners to bring the 2016 conference to fruition. Shondra will work with the CEDD to leverage additional resources from agencies such as the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) and other Health Human Services Commission (HHSC) to support the conference mission by providing valuable information about mental health and intellectual and developmental disabilities through culturally sensitive education, supports and partnerships.

Additional Concerns Noted by TCDD Staff

5. **The federal legislation from 2013 cited by the applicant did not pass, and similar federal legislation introduced in 2015 is still pending. Federal funding for mental health first aid has been available through the Substance Abuse and Mental health Services Administration's Project AWARE.**

Clarification: *We selected this legislation as it relates to the topics associated with the conference. The legislation in Texas does not include other community sectors and has not been funded. We are proposing to highlight how this particular legislation excludes important key first responders such as members of the faith-based leaders. We would like to highlight how the language in this legislation should be more inclusive. We are planning to host a Mental Health First Aid Training that includes members of the community to participate in discussions that are culturally sensitive to faith-based leaders, community stakeholders inclusive of members, consumers and their family members. We utilize the similar format from the 2013 Mental Health First Aid Training hosted by the conference project.*

The expectations of Project AWARE-Now is Time (Project AWARE-NITT) is to increase health literacy and help-seeking behaviors related to mental health. The project has a youth education

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focus. We located the Request for Proposal (RFP) for Project AWARE-NITT during the time of preparing for the Culturally Appropriate Family Supports Project application and the deadline to respond had past. We are following this and other funding endeavors related to the project goals and mission. We will continue to defer to the project's logic and sustainability plan to support the ongoing efforts of the conference planning.

6. There are many budget issues that need to be addressed. Some costs might not be allowable depending on the explanation. More information is needed and liability insurance, CPA review, travel stipends, and other items. Some numbers were miscalculated.

Clarification: Budget Detail Summary highlights our budget for the planning and execution of the project. We utilize the previous approved budget as a format to develop the budget for the 2016 conference expenditures such as:

1) Liability insurance- the liability insurance was indicated to secure and protect the participants materials and equipment at the conference. Some rental venues require that liability or event insurance is secured;

2) CPA Review- the CPA Review was indicated to ensure a comprehensive review of the fiduciary evaluation of the expenditures to match the sustainability and evaluation plan per the logic model;

3) Travel stipends- the travel stipends was indicated as opportunities for the members of the committee members (consumers and family members) to have financial aid to assist with travel needs to attend the planning, development and capacity-building meetings. Capacity-building meetings also includes attendance to the Central Texas African American Family Support Conference (CTAAFSC). Committee members will be afforded to engage and see fidelity to the conference work model with CTAAFSC.

6a. It appears typos were observed in the budget narrative.

Clarifications: The Project Director will be available up to 692 + hours over a 12 month period at an hourly rate of \$22. TCDD will cover 454.50 hours at \$22/hour at \$10,000. The match will cover 238 hours at \$22/hour at \$5,000.

Web Presence/Development and Maintenance: TCDD funds will cover at \$1500 the expense of web presence and development (\$1000), internet maintenance at (\$300) technical management(\$200).

Telephone: Match funds will cover the expense for landline, internet and office cell services at \$1920 per year. Phone services(540/year at 45 per month); internet services(705/ year at 58 per/month); mobile hotspot services (250/ year at 20 per month); internet services (120/year at 10.00 per month) and office cell office support (305/year at 25 per month).

Additionally, we are prepared to further modify the budget item lines to align with the criteria per the request for the proposal.

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7. There does not appear to be a plan to add a focus on IDD, although there are a great number of individuals with IDD who have co-occurring physical or mental health concerns

***Clarifications:** To date, the conference has had educational tracks to include topics related to consumers, family members and professionals working with persons with disabilities, including persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The committee selects conference format, theme, educational sessions and activities. The committee specifically select topics to highlight needs and concerns related mental health, co-occurring disabilities, including IDD.*

Each conference, we survey the participants and request feedback from the community to ensure the development of topics and activities conveys the interest of the participants and the mission of the conference. The results of the survey includes the community's request on topics related to health and social service navigation, understanding co-occurring diagnosis and caregivers support.

The selection of the conference speakers includes pairing a professional and a consumer and/or family member to present as a panel or co-presenters. GCTAAFSC follows the fidelity of the model from the Central Texas African American Family Support Conference in selecting speakers/presenters and topics. This process is closely adhered to, to ensure the focus of conference remains consumer and family member driven. The ultimate goal is to support education and awareness from a perspective inclusive of IDD.

8. The proposal neither addresses identification and development of new advocates and leaders nor indicates how information will be provided to TCDD about how to develop and share culturally-sensitive information. Both are required by the RFP

***Clarification:** In 2016, the project will host a Mental Health First Aid Training. This training will be extended to faith-based leaders including consumers and family members to become new advocates and leaders in their perspective communities. Individuals will become certified as mental health first aiders. Typically, the African American faith-based community is considered like the nuclei for information, resources and support. By offering a Mental Health First Aid Training to the faith-based community, the outreach can extend disability awareness and education to further decrease stigma and discrimination. This educational opportunity will engage persons to lead, advocate and support help seeking behaviors.*

Additionally, we developed a conference planning guide for interested persons to serve as committee planning members. This guide also supports the committee members being sub-committee chairs and co-chairs. We engage the committee members to lead and co-lead in discussion and planning activities to support the conference planning efforts.

TCDD will be afforded the opportunity to attend the conference, trainings, participate in meetings and discussion on how the project engages and support the dissemination of culturally sensitive information. To date, TCDD has participated in the conference planning efforts and attended the conference. TCDD participates in discussions and perspectives about the

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conference mission, goals and culturally sensitive topics related to the African Americans perspectives on disability awareness and help-seeking behaviors.

In 2016, TCDD will be afforded the opportunity to receive our comprehensive evaluation report conveying outcomes of the project endeavors. The report will outline the outcomes from the logic model and evaluation plan on how TCDD can work with and outreach and utilized culturally sensitive methodologies with similar communities and ethnicity groups. To date, we have included the TCDD's grants officer in the planning meetings and discussions. We have openly shared our developmental processes with TCDD to support educational dissemination. For example, we educated on our inter-developmental and infrastructure process titled "the conference playbook" with TCDD's grants officer. The conference playbook is an engagement tool for the committee members and volunteers to be fully engaged about the inter operations of the conference.

This developmental process was shared and replicated for use with the Central Texas African American Family Support Conference (CTAAFSC). The CTAAFSC adopted the use of the conference playbook for the same purposes.

The GCTAAFSC project have used this educational platform to convey the sincere mission to strengthen families and increase awareness of health and social service information and resources available through culturally sensitive education, supports, and partnerships for African Americans. We look forward to being a support to the community.

Thank you for considering our request. Respectfully submitting,



Jerrilyn Hayes



Mary Durham, Chair
Kristen L. Cox, Vice Chair
Beth Stalvey, Executive Director

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September 8, 2015

Jerrilyn Hayes
Project Director
Helpful Interventions
Gulf Coast of Texas African American Family Support Conference
P.O. Box 671526
Houston, TX 77267-1526

Subject: Acknowledgment of Appeal Received

Dear Ms. Hayes:

Please accept this notice as written receipt of your letter dated August 26, 2015, appealing the TCDD decision not to fund your proposal for the Culturally Appropriate Family Supports project. Consistent with Council Policies concerning an Appeal of Funding Decisions, TCDD staff will review this appeal with the Council's Executive Committee that will make the final decision. At that time, TCDD staff will notify you regarding the outcome of this appeal.

Thank you for your interest in advancing the mission of the Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities.

Sincerely,

Beth Stalvey
Executive Director

Copy: TCDD Executive Committee

BS/fr

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TO: Executive Committee Members

FROM: Beth Stalvey, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Review of Appeal: Helpful Interventions

DATE: October 16, 2015

Helpful Interventions submitted an application to receive grant funding under the Culturally Appropriate Family Supports Project Request for Proposals. The applicant submitted a proposal on June 17, 2015. The proposal was reviewed by an independent review panel on July 17, 2015. The reviewer comments and recommendations were presented to the Executive Committee during the August 2015 quarterly meetings.

The Executive Committee reviewed the Executive Summary that summarized comments from the panel and discussed comments and considerations. Following discussion, the Executive Committee did not approve funding for this proposal.

TCDD provided notice to Helpful Interventions about the funding decision on August 13, 2015, and included the Council's Process to Appeal a funding decision and a summary of the review panel comments. TCDD received an appeal of the Council's funding decision from Jerrilyn Hayes on August 26, 2015, within the 15 workdays allowed by the Council's Policy for an appeal of a funding decision. The Appeal Letter provided by Jerrilyn Hayes is attached.

The appeal from Helpful Interventions asks TCDD to reconsider the decision to not approve funds for Culturally Appropriate Family Supports Project. In the Appeal letter, Helpful Interventions addresses each of the review panel concerns with the original grant proposal and provides information to clarify or respond to comments included in TCDD summary of review comments. Much of this information was not provided in the original application. We note that the purpose of the Council's Process to Appeal a funding decision is to ensure that TCDD procedures were followed, and that information provided in the proposal was reviewed fairly and objectively. The Process to Appeal is not designed as an opportunity to provide additional information for consideration when such information could have been included in the original proposal. To do so would in essence create a two-stage review process that is not part of TCDD's current procedures. A copy of the TCDD Appeals Procedure is attached.

TCDD staff have reviewed the process used to review the Helpful Interventions proposal for Culturally Appropriate Family Supports Project and find no concerns regarding any procedural matters. The information provided to the Executive Committee on the Executive Summary for the August discussion appears to be fair and objective. Based on our review of this matter, we do not see any indication of procedural concerns during the review process. And as noted earlier, much of the information provided by Helpful Interventions in the appeal was not provided in the original proposal. Considering that information at this time creates a 2-step review process that is not intended by current Council approved procedures.

Attachments:

- Written Appeal from Helpful Interventions
- TCDD Acknowledgement Letter
- TCDD Appeal Procedure

Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities

Council Policies

Section X. TCDD Grant Projects

I. Appeal of Funding Decisions

1. Appeals may be submitted from applicants for grants who did not receive funding or from grantees whose grants have not been awarded continuation funding. The person or entity appealing shall be known as the appellant.
2. Appeals of funding decisions shall be received, processed, and resolved with fairness and promptness.
3. The appellant shall file an appeal in writing addressed to the Executive Director. The written appeal must be postmarked within 10 workdays of the date of the written notice of suspension or within 15 workdays of the date of written notice of denial of new or continuation funding. The written appeal shall include all relevant facts and information that the appellant wishes to have considered as well as the proposed remedy being sought. The Executive Director will acknowledge receipt of the letter with a copy to the Executive Committee.
4. The Executive Director will investigate, compile, and study all relevant information about the appeal and, within 30 workdays of the receipt of the appellant's letter and submit a written report to the Executive Committee. The report will contain recommended action and the evidence supporting the recommended action.
5. The Executive Committee may approve the recommendations of the executive director, make such modifications as deemed appropriate, order further investigation, or take other appropriate action.
6. The decision of the Executive Committee is final.
7. Council staff shall notify the appellant of the final determination of the appeal.